

**REMARKS**

Currently, claims 2-17, 19, 21, and 22 are pending in the present application.

Claims 15-17 are presently withdrawn.

Previous claim 6 has been incorporated into independent claim 21. In the Office Action, previous claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the EPO translation of International Application No. WO 00/20204 to Ziegler. Ziegler is directed to a composite composition that includes polyacetals and thermoplastic styrene elastomers. The thermoplastic styrene elastomer may be molded onto the polyacetal. Ziegler discloses that the styrene elastomer, by itself, does not adhere well to the polyacetal. As such, the styrene elastomer includes a small amount of modifier. Among numerous such modifiers, thermoplastic polyamides are disclosed.

Applicants disclose that styrene/olefin elastomers are among known combinations produced by multicomponent injection molding. (¶0009). However, as outlined by Applicants, to date, polyamides have not been utilized as a thermoplastic component molded onto a polyacetal component. Thus, Applicants believe that one skilled in the art would understand that a styrene elastomer thermoplastic component that includes a small amount of polyamide modifier would not encompass Applicants' claimed limitations. However, in an attempt to expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 21 to require that the thermoplastic elastomer component consists essentially of at least one polyamide. Clearly, Ziegler fails to disclose or render obvious such a limitation as the only disclosure of a polyamide component is merely as a modifier to the required styrene elastomer. As such, Applicants believe that the present claims define over Ziegler.

Additionally, in the Office Action, previous claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The Examiner indicates that the scope of the term "modifier" is unclear. Applicants have presently deleted claim 5. While independent claim 21 now requires at least one "modifier," the "modifier" is sufficiently described as selected from the group consisting of thermoplastic polyurethane elastomer, methyl methacrylate-butadiene-styrene core-shell elastomer, methyl methacrylate-acrylate core-shell elastomer, polycarbonate, styrene-acrylonitrile copolymer, and acrylate-styrene-acrylonitrile copolymer compounded material. As such, Applicants believe that "modifier" is sufficiently defined.

As a final matter, upon allowance of claim 21, Applicants respectfully request rejoinder of claims 15-17 which depend upon claim 21 (thus including all limitations of claim 21).

Thus, it is believed that the present application is in complete condition for allowance and favorable action is respectfully requested. Examiner Freeman is invited and encouraged to telephone the undersigned, however, should any issues remain after consideration of this Amendment.

Please charge any fees required by this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 04-1403.

Respectfully submitted,  
DORITY & MANNING, P.A.

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